

Application No. 09/745,816

Filed: December 22, 2000

TC Art Unit: 1771

Confirmation No.: 8690

In the Claims

Please amend the claims to as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A buffing or polishing material comprising:
a nonwoven fleece layer comprising a blend of natural fibers and synthetic fibers, a ratio by weight of natural fibers to synthetic fibers ranging between 95% natural fibers and 5% synthetic fibers to 50% natural fibers and 50% synthetic fibers

the natural and synthetic fibers needle punched together; and

a backing fixed as a layer to the fleece layer, the backing having a greater strength and a greater dimensional stability than the fleece layer; and

a nonwoven fusible layer interposed between the fleece layer and the backing, the fleece layer needle punched to the backing.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The material of claim ~~3~~ 1, the nonwoven fusible layer further comprising a polyester material.

5. (Cancelled)

Application No. 09/745,816

Filed: December 22, 2000

TC Art Unit: 1771

Confirmation No.: 8690

6. (Currently Amended) The material of claim ~~5~~ 1, wherein the fleece layer forms loops on an outer side of the backing.

7. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein the ratio of natural fibers to synthetic fibers comprises 85% natural fibers and 15% synthetic fibers by weight of the fleece layer.

8. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein the natural fibers of the fleece layer include wool, cotton, hemp, linen, flax, sisal, or jute.

9. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein the synthetic fibers of the fleece layer include nylon, polyester, or aramid fibers.

10. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the synthetic fibers of the fleece layer include mechanically binding fibers.

11. (Original) The material of claim 10, wherein the mechanically binding fibers comprise up to 45% by weight of the fleece layer.

Application No. 09/745,816
Filed: December 22, 2000
TC Art Unit: 1771
Confirmation No.: 8690

12. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the synthetic fibers of the fleece layer include chemically binding fibers.

13. (Original) The material of claim 12, wherein the chemically binding fibers comprise polyester fibers having a lower melting temperature than a remainder of the synthetic fibers or of the natural fibers.

14. (Original) The material of claim 12, wherein the chemically binding fibers comprise up to 5% by weight of the fleece layer.

15. (Original) The material of claim 14, wherein a remainder of the synthetic fibers comprises up to 45% by weight of the fleece layer.

16. (Previously presented) The material of claim 1, wherein the backing comprises a multi-filament polyester fiber layer and a polyester film layer.

17. (Previously presented) The material of claim 1, wherein the backing comprises a nonwoven material, a woven cloth, a film, a spunbond material, a scrim, or a loop fabric.

Application No. 09/745,816

Filed: December 22, 2000

TC Art Unit: 1771

Confirmation No.: 8690

18. (Previously presented) The material of claim 1, wherein the backing has a break strength greater than the fleece layer and an elongation at break less than the fleece layer.

19. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein the density of the fleece layer is 4.2 lb/ft³ to 9.2 lb/ft³.

20. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein the material has a break strength of at least 425 pounds per linear inch in the machine direction.

21. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein the material has an elongation at break of no more than 2%.

22. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein the material has a thickness between 0.17 inch to 0.50 inch.

23. (Previously presented) The material of claim 1, wherein the backing is configured to fasten to a polishing, buffing, or finishing tool.

24. (Original) The material of claim 1, wherein the material is in the form of a disc, an endless belt, a flapwheel, or a spiral band.

Application No. 09/745,816

Filed: December 22, 2000

TC Art Unit: 1771

Confirmation No.: 8690

25. (Currently Amended) A buffing or polishing material comprising:

a nonwoven fleece layer comprising a blend of natural fibers and synthetic fibers;

a backing fixed to the fleece layer, the backing having a greater strength and a greater dimensional stability than the fleece layer; and

a nonwoven fusible layer interposed between the fleece layer and the backing, the fleece layer needle punched to the backing;

wherein the material has a break strength of at least 425 pounds per linear inch in the machine direction and an elongation at break of no more than 2%.

26. (Currently amended) A buffing or polishing material comprising:

a nonwoven fleece layer comprising a blend of natural fibers and synthetic fibers, the synthetic fibers comprising no more than 50% by weight of a ratio of natural fibers to synthetic fibers;

at least a portion of the synthetic fibers including fibers chemically bound to others of the synthetic fibers and the natural fibers;

the natural fibers and the synthetic fibers needle punched together;

a backing fixed as a layer to the fleece layer, the backing having a greater strength and a greater dimensional stability than the fleece layer; and

wherein the fleece layer is needle punched to the backing; and

Application No. 09/745,816

Filed: December 22, 2000

TC Art Unit: 1771

Confirmation No.: 8690

a nonwoven fusible layer interposed between the fleece layer and the backing.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently amended) The material of claim ~~27~~ 26, the nonwoven fusible layer further comprising a polyester material.

29. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the fleece layer forms loops on an outer side of the backing.

30. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the ratio of natural fibers to synthetic fibers comprises 85% natural fibers and 15% synthetic fibers by weight of the fleece layer.

31. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the natural fibers of the fleece layer include wool, cotton, hemp, linen, flax, sisal, or jute.

32. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the synthetic fibers of the fleece layer include nylon, polyester, or aramid fibers.

Application No. 09/745,816
Filed: December 22, 2000
TC Art Unit: 1771
Confirmation No.: 8690

33. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein at least a portion of the synthetic fibers of the fleece layer include mechanically binding fibers.

34. (Previously presented) The material of claim 33, wherein the mechanically binding fibers comprise up to 45% by weight of the fleece layer.

35. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein at least a portion of the synthetic fibers of the fleece layer include chemically binding fibers.

36. (Previously presented) The material of claim 35, wherein the chemically binding fibers comprise polyester fibers having a lower melting temperature than a remainder of the synthetic fibers or of the natural fibers.

37. (Previously presented) The material of claim 35, wherein the chemically binding fibers comprise up to 5% by weight of the fleece layer.

38. (Previously presented) The material of claim 37, wherein a remainder of the synthetic fibers comprises up to 45% by weight of the fleece layer.

Application No. 09/745,816

Filed: December 22, 2000

TC Art Unit: 1771

Confirmation No.: 8690

39. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the backing comprises a multi-filament polyester fiber layer and a polyester film layer.

40. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the backing comprises a nonwoven material, a woven cloth, a film, a spunbond material, a scrim, or a loop fabric.

41. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the backing has a break strength greater than the fleece layer and an elongation at break less than the fleece layer.

42. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the density of the fleece layer is 4.2 lb/ft³ to 9.2 lb/ft³.

43. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the material has a break strength of at least 425 pounds per linear inch in the machine direction.

44. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the material has an elongation at break of no more than 2%.

Application No. 09/745,816
Filed: December 22, 2000
TC Art Unit: 1771
Confirmation No.: 8690

45. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the material has a thickness between 0.17 inch to 0.50 inch.

46. (Previously presented) The material of claim 26, wherein the backing is configured to fasten to a polishing, buffing, or finishing tool.

47. (Previously presented) The material of claim 25, wherein the material is in the form of a disc, an endless belt, a flapwheel, or a spiral band.